

**GRIST FROM THE MILL FOR OUR VOLUNTEERS**  
**COLVIN RUN MILL HISTORIC SITE**  
February 2003

## **Coming Attractions**

The winter months are quiet at most museums – especially those with outdoor attractions (or an unheated mill). It is the perfect time to meet, learn from, and interact with staff and volunteers from Fairfax County, the Middle Atlantic Region, and farther afield. Below are upcoming events that you may want to attend.



### **Small Museum Conference** **February 22-24 in Ocean City, Md.**

Walk the Ocean City beach without the summer crowds. The 20<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Small Museums Association is Feb. 22-24 at the Clarion Fontainebleau in Ocean City, Md.

We would love to have the company of any volunteers who want to learn the nuts and bolts of small museums and meet the interesting people, many of them volunteers, who operate these local treasures.

The conference cost of \$130 includes sessions on Monday and Tuesday, four meals, a wine and cheese reception on Sunday evening and one-year membership in the Small Museum Association. The Clarion offers a special room rate of \$50 per room. Ann Korzeniewski, co-president of the association, has more information.



### **Volunteer Orientation** **March 6 9:30-11:30am**

On Saturday, March 6 from 9:30-11:30am, Resource Management volunteers will meet at Huntley Meadows Park. Discover Colvin Run Mill Historic Site's unique place in the Park Authority, meet volunteers from other sites and learn about the opportunities and benefits available to volunteers. Please let Mary Allen know if you will attend.



### **Volunteer Breakfast** **March 13, 9am – 11am**

On Saturday, March 13, bring a guest or guests to enjoy the gourmet food, congenial company and interpretive food for thought in the Colvin Run Barn. We'll have pancakes and syrup – from our trees if the weather warms. When the nights are below freezing and the days over 40 degrees, sap from maple trees begins to flow, continuing until the trees bud. Mason Maddox taps the trees and boils the resulting sap into syrup. Whether we use our homegrown syrup or a less superior brand, the kitchen crew are greasing their griddles in preparation for a bountiful breakfast.



## **Virginia Association of Museums Conference March 20-23**

The Virginia Association of Museums, founded in 1968, brings together members of the Virginia museum community to further education, foster development, and provide a forum to voice common concerns and share ideas. With over 700 members, it is the second largest state museum association in the country, surpassed only by Texas.

This year's VAM conference will be held in Tyson's Corner and many Fairfax County Park Authority staff are involved in the planning and execution of a successful event. Jeanne Niccolls will give a session on Collections Management. Mike Henry (who is a regional director of the Association), Carol McDonnell of Sully and Yvonne Johnson of Frying Pan Park will all be involved in presenting sessions. Ann Korzeniewski and Susan Clark are on the local arrangements committee.



### **VAM Tour March 21 6:30-8pm**

On Sunday evening, March 21, we will welcome members of the Virginia Association of Museums as they watch Mason Maddox grind meal and learn about Colvin Run Mill. Ann Korzeniewski and Susan Clark have arranged *An Evening in Fairfax and Loudoun Counties* from 6 to 9pm for Virginia's museum professionals. Participants will visit the Fairfax Museum and Visitors' Center in Fairfax City; then they will come to Colvin Run Mill for a grinding demonstration and reception catered by Colleen Evans Patton, former site manager. The tour will end at the new Loudoun Heritage Farm Museum in Sterling, Virginia.

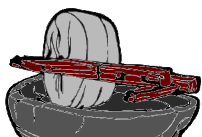
What a great opportunity to meet and greet about 200 people from various Virginia museums and answer questions about Colvin Run Mill. If you would like to participate, please let Ann or Mary Allen know, or sign up in the volunteer room.



### **A Few Favorite Things March 26 9am-3:30pm**

On Friday March 26 from 9am to 3:30, the Collections Section of the Fairfax County Park Authority will present *A Few Favorite Things: Pleasures and Pastimes in Early America* at George Mason University. Pets, games, music, dancing, confections -- these are just some of the topics to be discussed and demonstrated. Jeanne Niccolls and Susan Clark have recruited authorities from Winterthur, the Colonial Music Institute, the University of South Carolina and the Library Company of Philadelphia to present intriguing insights into how early Americans spent their leisure time.

The \$55 registration includes lectures, demonstrations, tabletop displays as well as parking and lunch. Prepaid registration is required by March 14. For more information, see the flyer in the volunteer room, or contact Susan at 703-631-1429 or [susan.clark@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:susan.clark@fairfaxcounty.gov).



## Millstone Removed

Monday volunteer Joe Pruden has taken a big millstone from around Dawn Kehrers' neck. For several years, Dawn has collected the temperature and humidity levels of nine places on site. The data was to be sent to the Collections section in chart form. However, Dawn didn't have the skills to prepare spreadsheets or change the information to charts, so the collected data was just accumulating.

Then, thankfully, Joe set up Excel spreadsheets and showed Dawn how to convert the data to charts. Mary Dettra and Muriel Levin helped Dawn average the raw data to enter on the spreadsheets. With their help, all the data is up to date, in chart form, and forwarded to the Collections section. Phew!



## Welcome New Volunteers

Eugenia Davis always enjoyed visiting Colvin Run Mill when her husband Bob was volunteering. After Bob died suddenly in October, Genie wanted to continue his legacy, but she didn't want to give tours or crank ice cream. With her computer skills and genial nature, Genie is a natural for the job general store keeper, and will fill the vacancy on Mondays. We are so glad to have her as an official volunteer continuing Bob's long love affair with the mill and the site programs.

Ginny Rogers recently moved to Great Falls, leaving her management job in Maryland to follow her fiancé to the area. She drove by Colvin Run Mill every day, and was curious enough to look us up on the web and respond to our request for volunteers. Though she has never led tours before, Ginny is enthusiastic about this new challenge. She has also decided to change careers and is going to massage therapy school. As part of her studies, Ginny must practice her massage therapy skills on willing subjects. We have generously volunteered to help.



## Lars Teppo

Lars, a Sunday docent, is an active member of the Army reserves. He has been told to be ready to leave for Iraq at any time. So for now, Lars has taken a leave from volunteering at Colvin Run Mill while he and his wife Kym prepare for a possible sudden call-up and spend lots of time with their infant son Kai. If Lars doesn't hear any definite deployment news by the end of Kym's spring semester at law school, he hopes to return to volunteering in the summer. We all wish him well and hope to see him soon.



## From the Miller's Corner

In cleaning out the site files, we found an interesting page of mill trivia – interesting information that you may never need, but is handy to have in case someone asks. The information sheet is included with your newsletter.



## **Arti-Facts from Dawn**

While choosing an artifact to write about from among the myriad of collection items in the General Store Dawn's eyes drifted to the candy counter and the colorful rock candy. Mmmmm! See what she discovered about this tasty treat.



## **On the Road with Bob and Marge**

Switching from making human food to producing animal feed was a process undertaken by many old flour mills. Marge and Bob saw a good example of this at Gower's Mill in Washington County, Maryland.

# Colvin Run Mill Trivia

Site Size	approximately 35 acres
Building Dimensions	
Interior	approximately 50 ft x 41 ft
Height	38 ft at north end, 48 feet at south end
Water Wheel	
Type	overshot
Material	white oak
Number of spokes	16
Diameter	20 feet
Axle Diameter	2 feet
Rotation speed while grinding	approximately 10 rpm
Lifespan	approximately 20-25 years
Millrace length	approximately 2400 feet
Manpower to run 3 stones	2 to 4 people
Beam Scale capacity (in wheat)	15 bushels (about 900 lbs.)
Accepted Weights for Grain	
Corn	56 lbs/bushel
Wheat	60 lbs/bushel
Buckwheat	48 lbs/bushel
Yields (ideal for Evans' type mills)	
Flour from wheat	64%
Flour output per stone	12-15 barrels a day (2,500-3,000 lbs)
Gear Dimensions	
Main shaft diameter	16 inches
Greater face gear diameter	10 feet, 11 inches
Lesser face gear diameter	7 feet, 9 inches
Wallower gear diameter	3 feet, 8 inches
Wallower rung length	12 inches

## Rock Candy



One of the big attractions at the general store is "penny candies" (that only cost a nickel) like those from the last century. Rock candy is one of the most popular candies for sale and children clamor for these difficult-to-resist colorful rocks of sugar wrapped around a wooden stick.

The sweet month of February is a good time to explore the origins of one of our best sellers with the children. Sugar growing and processing has a long history that began in the South Pacific and spread to Asia, Egypt, Iran and Europe. In 10<sup>th</sup> century Europe, sugar was considered a valuable medicine and food preservative. Shakespeare referred to sugar's therapeutic value as a throat soother for long-winded talkers in Henry IV.

Rock candy has been produced by the Dryden & Palmer Company of Connecticut since the late 1800s. According to the Dryden & Palmer web page, Rock Candy is the product of the further refining by recrystallization of pure cane sugar. In fact, it is the purest form of sugar available because all impurities are excluded as the large crystals form. The crystal growth is based on the particular characteristics of sugar (sucrose) chemistry and cannot be done with the various "sugar free" substitutes seen in the market.

During the 1800s, several companies in America supplied various forms of sugar crystals and syrups for cough and cold remedies, soda fountain syrups and confections. Saloons bought large amounts of sugar crystals to make their own versions of "Rock and Rye", rock candy dissolved in rye whiskey that was supposed to cure customers' colds.

Although corn syrup has replaced sugar in many of today's sweetened products, Dryden & Palmer still makes boxes of clear sugar crystals, which they have sold since the late 1800s. In the 1960s, they began putting the sugar crystals on a wooden stick and added colors and flavors in the 1970s. These colorful swizzle sticks quickly became a hit with children of all ages who enjoyed exploring the sweet pleasures of the past.



If you would like to know how to make rock candy in your own kitchen, see the web site <http://www.exploratorium.edu/cooking/candy/recipe-rockcandy.html>